

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Purcell Powless
Chairman

FROM: Charles Leonard
P.R. Consultant

DATE: December 11, 1985

SUBJECT: News Coverage Re: Swearing In Ceremony

This memo is to let you know that the Tribe may have suffered a loss of credibility with certain members of the media this week. I have received angry calls from the Editor of the News-Chronicle and two of the three television stations because they were NOT given equal treatment on the swearing in of our new Police Chief Monday night.

Percy, I was never informed of the timing of this event. That doesn't upset me. What does bother me is that the media looks to me to keep them EQUALLY informed of the events on the reservation. Because of that, they feel free to level their anger at me and that's fine.... that's what I get paid for.

However, I must agree with those who called. We have asked them repeatedly to be fair with us. And, I feel that in recent months they have done a good job. However, they expect fairness in return and, in this particular instance, they didn't get it.

By way of background: I was told several weeks ago (perhaps five or six weeks) that a ceremony was planned, but the date and time had not been set. I said great, "Let me know when and I'll do a news release." I even made a note and put it aside as a reminder. On at least one occasion since then, I asked if a date had been set and was told, "no".

No one ever gave me any further information and as a consequence, no media notice was given.

I have no idea who contacted Joanne Zipperer of the Press Gazette, nor is that really important. What is of concern is that if other tribal representatives are to contact the media for coverage without my knowledge, they MUST CONTACT ALL OF THE MEDIA, NOT JUST ONE.

An organization gains credibility and fair treatment from the media only by being fair and honest with them. Treating the media fairly does not insure fair treatment from the media, it certainly places us on firmer ground to request it and make a case for it.